

"Until the Consummation of the World."

When one, Catholic or non-Catholic, looks back at the condition of the Church three hundred years ago, and compares it with to-day, looking at it from a human standpoint, the spectacle is marvelous. Then heresy broke Christendom in two, and snatched all Northern Europe from the Church. One hundred years later, two hundred years ago, at the commencement of the eighteenth century, of all the British dominions Catholicity could be said to exist only in Ireland, and there it was cut down to less than three quarters of a million and they were supposed to be without a Bishop, or even a priest, as the laws banished these under pain of death. In two centuries Catholicity has not only become the religion of the vast majority in Ireland, but it has brought back the hierarchy in England and Scotland, and spread with the spread of Great Britain all over her empire. The British Year Book gives the following statistics for Great Britain and its independencies in 1896.

"In the British Empire there are four cardinals; in England and Wales, seventeen bishops; Scotland, 7 bishops and 365,000 Catholics. In the British Isles there are 3879 priests, of whom 2090 are seculars and 1789 congregations. In England there are 1,500,000 Catholics, in Ireland, 3,500,000, making a total in Great Britain of 5,000,000. In the English colonies there are 10,250,000 Catholic subjects. Total under British jurisdiction, 15,750,000.

From that three quarters of a million, and in the face of massacres as bloody and laws as barbarous as those by which Islamism stamped Christianity out of Asia Minor, Catholics have grown to fifteen millions and three quarters in the British Domains besides the millions of English speaking Catholics in the United States. From the *Economiste Francais* the New York *News* gives the following statistics for other non-Catholic lands:

| | In 1800. | In 1890. |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Germany (Catholics) | 6,000,000 | 16,000,000 |
| Switzerland | 350,000 | 1,080,409 |
| Turkey in Asia and Europe | 631,000 | 1,298,475 |
| India | 475,000 | 1,692,337 |
| Indo-China | 310,000 | 790,772 |
| China | 187,000 | 576,440 |
| The U. S. (now 10,000,000) | 61,000 | 7,977,270 |
| Canada | 122,000 | 2,000,000 |
| The Antilles and British Guyana | 119,000 | 337,550 |
| Oceania | 2,800 | 2,000,000 |
| Africa | 47,000 | 3,000,000 |
| England and Scotland | 120,000 | 1,690,921 |
| Holland | 350,000 | 1,448,852 |
| Russia (Poland not included) about | 20,000 | 2,935,519 |
| | 8,832,800 | 42,728,745 |

In those other non-Catholic lands above mentioned, leaving out Canada, the Antilles and British Guyana, and England and Scotland, the Church has grown from 8,471,800 to 37,700,074, growing over four fold in those non-Catholic lands within the present century.

Yet it could not be otherwise. The Redeemer, her Founder, decreed that she shall be on earth "until the consummation of the world," and it is in vain that Satan combats her with hosts of error. The Church lives on and expands over the world, and gains new victories almost as if error was not. Springing from the side of Christ she waters the dreary earth, and she sows over the earth the seeds of the faith deposited with her, and this ever fresh faith bursts everywhere into blossom enriching all men with its fruits.

In the midst of what the world calls weakness she is stronger than all things, because supernaturally strong, because her strength is not from man, is independent of man, is in despite of evil men, is from God who founded her. Yes; she alone possesses sustained strength against which man is weak. She is the fulfillment of the promise